

CLAIMS

18. (New) An automated provisioning system adapted to use an LDAP or X.500 compatible directory enabled information repository, the system comprising a service manager adapted to interface with the information repository and components of a distributed electronic system, wherein the information repository comprises a scalable data model, wherein the service manager is adapted to log on to a directory and interacts therewith to create, delete, amend and/or search for information in the information repository, wherein the service manager is also adapted to interact, through a plurality of interfaces, with components and users of the distributed electronic system to enable authentication and authorization to use services running on the components.

19. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 18, wherein the data model comprises domains, users, services, profiles and infrastructure.

B 1  
20. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 18, wherein a subscriber uses an automatic on-line subscriber self-registration system to subscribe to new services, or to modify or unsubscribe from existing services via a user interface, which interface interacts with the service manager.

21. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 20, for use in a cable TV system, wherein the system permits subscription to a multitude of services.

22. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 19, wherein users are provided with profiles defining services and components available to the user, each user having at least one profile.

23. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 22, in which the profile comprises a base profile, which base profile describes the core characteristics of the user.

24. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 23, in which the profile further comprises an extension profile, which extension profile represents refinements to services available to the user.

25. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 24, in which the profile comprises a combination of one or more base profiles and extension profiles.

26. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 18, in which the system provides a trigger mechanism for the creation, deletion or modification of information outside of the directory server thus enabling information distribution to billing systems, databases and workflow management.

B 27. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 18, wherein requests, initiated via a user interface, are made to the service manager by a plurality of servers.

28. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 27, wherein the system comprises one or more of a plurality of object request brokers and a plurality of service managers.

29. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 20, wherein the user interfaces comprise web interfaces adapted to use servlets to create a separate thread of execution for each individual request.

30. (New) An automated provisioning system according to claim 18, wherein the system is provided with a directory communication layer enables the service manager to work with multiple directories.